



Never Get a Boob Job in Mexico, 4/01/07: While having a mundane discussion, NoHos Cara and Blue respond to Sophia's call for help: one of her breasts appears to be deflating. She exclaims, "Never get a boob job in Mexico!" The group then announces it is an April Fool's prank.



Blue's Decision about Going Topless, 12/21/06: NoHo Blue, who has begun a job as a cocktail waitress in a strip club, discusses an offer to strip there. In a later episode she tells how she had the chance to go onstage and finally tried it, but decided it's not for her.

Webisodic mock vlogs: HoShows as commercial entertainment new media

by [Chuck Kleinhans](#)

One feature of the current state of the Internet, Web 2.0, is the widespread appearance of vlogs (from *video web logs* — serial videos from the same source), including mock series which appear only on the web as episodic dramas.[1][\[open endnotes in new window\]](#) One set of examples are the collectively known HoShows.

Let me be clear I that I don't have some grand claim about my subject or the specific object of investigation. I don't think the HoShows have decisive meaning or are a significant contribution to the aesthetic, cultural, or institutional nature of screen media. This stuff is profoundly mediocre. But then, why consider it? I think it notable as precisely a moment, a passing fancy in screen technology. This lets us have some insight into those things, which are similar in one way or another, and the very fact of living in a rapidly changing "new media" present. You can step in the river, but it keeps flowing. Today technological change, institutional and regulatory change, industrial change, and audience adaptation flow together in new patterns, with changing currents and interesting eddies. So, while the specific example is not very notable, the larger trend it is a part of is worth considering. I'll return to this at the end.

I came across the WeHoGirls in their early months from links on other sites. Originally I was looking at and for diary vlogs following an earlier interest in Jennicam.[2] Through surfing, I found I preferred those which involved a certain amount of dramatic documentary rather than a lone vlogger talking to a webcam mounted on the domestic computer. I have an extensive knowledge of diaristic and autobiographical and personal media work from teaching and writing about experimental film and video as well as personal documentary including home movies, and also making some diaristic films. In surfing, I was interested in work that was shot on a single videocamera often in one long take dealing with fairly mundane events or discussions, rather than performances (dancing, lip-synching, etc.) or staged or comic events (funniest home videos genre) or active investigations of a space, place, event, etc. (a more traditional use of documentary).



Me, My Art & I, 9/23/06: NoHo's Cara discusses which art to exhibit in her upcoming show.



My Sex Tips Gig, 10/21/06: NoHo Daniella announces her new job of giving sexual advice for guys in a webisodic format on LiveVideo.



Sexology for Men #12 Blowjob: After leaving the NoHos, Daniella does a series of webisodic sex advice episodes for men for LiveVideo.com. In this one she tells guys how to

It seemed to me that what was emerging with new inexpensive video technology connected up with web exhibition was something like early portable video art such as diaristic PortaPak work done by conscious artists. But now it was being done naively by young people, in particular, using a new consumer technology and connected to their own narcissism. (I take that as a fact of origins for much artist production, not as in itself a judgment.) Some of this involved groups of family members (usually siblings), friends, and roommates. Much of the imagination of this kind of work existed with the pre-existing model of MTV's early reality dramas *Real Life* and *Road Rules*, which established for a generation the documentation of an artificially formed group of young people as the object of the gaze. Later shows such as *Big Brother* extended the trope in a competition and prize format. I should also mention that a web-based exploitation format paralleled these late 90s and early 00s developments: the commercial porn webcasts that extend the earlier phone sex format with visuals and the house of "college girls" who spend all day and night in a house with many spycams and occupy themselves with dressing, undressing, showering, masturbating, and having sex with other women in the house.

Starting in September 2006, for one year a small Los Angeles media production house, Iron Sink Media, produced an interrelated series of short episodic fake vlogs commissioned for LiveVideo.com.[3] Approaching near-daily frequency, the units dealt with the daily domestic lives of 20-something housemates in different neighborhoods: the [NoHoGirls](#), [WeHoGirls](#), [HiHoGirls](#), and [VanNuysGuys](#) franchises (covering North Hollywood, West Hollywood, Hollywood Hills, and Van Nuys neighborhoods of LA). [Click on titles to open sites in new window; see URLs in Notes section.][4]

By and large, the housemates were depicted as recent college grads seeking careers in the entertainment business. Ending after 12 months, collectively the HoShows had over 16 million viewers and produced over 900 short webisodes. The WeHoGirls finale had over 250,000 views at last count. The shows originated on LiveVideo's site, but many were quickly reposted to other video host sites such as Yahoo, Google and YouTube video. Iron Sink went on to produce *Roommates* for MySpaceTV, which uses a similar premise for short webisodes. Two 20-episode seasons of *Roommates* were produced in fall 2007 and winter-spring 2008.

Initially presented as reality vlogs, the shows gave no credits. (In this way the series was like the lonelygirl15 ersatz video blog which began June 2006; HoGirls began in September 2006.)[5] As posted on LiveVideo, viewers were invited to respond with their own videos and/or texts, providing a kind of "interactivity." From time to time within the show episodes, the characters would respond to blog comments posted by viewers. (Reading the comments—and sometimes viewing them with their vlog postings — reveals the posters as by and large not actual contemporaries of the talent on the screen but younger viewers — often young teens — and some older guys who often seem

behave to talk their woman into giving them fellatio.



Getting Back Together with Eddie, 5/22/07: “Development Executive” Angelica visits the WeHos telling them their vlog might be developed into a bigger reality series. She wants Leah and Mikaela to dump Brady (“a potty-mouth”) and tells a hesitant Leah that she needs an active love interest and should either get back together with Eddie or become a lesbian.



A WeHo Mothers Day, 5/13/07, 2.51 min.: Leah and Michaela are cross cut as ...

socially challenged.) Also, some of the fictional characters also had MySpace pages, inviting connections there. The characters in the separate streams came to interact from time to time, e.g., by responding to the vlog of another house, or one of the guys visiting one of the girls’ houses. Although a local LA news and entertainment blog, LAist, quickly identified the project as a corporate imitation of amateur vlogging,[6] many viewers apparently took the posts as “authentic,” at least for a while, or went along with the make-believe since it made it more entertaining.

Given the well-recognized problem of making vlogging (or any diarist work) interesting and entertaining to a broader audience than established friends, fellow geeks, and the emotionally limited, what made this project work? The producer/creator Scott Sakarin explains “the shows [sic] conceit of a make believe reality farce...[exhibiting] these very real fictional characters” allowed for viewer engagement.[7] Yes, he said: “very real fictional characters.”

I believe the project’s success rests partly in its close approximation of sitcom situations and scenes, the fairly engaging nature of the fresh on-screen talent, and the topical range of typical domestic issues of young adults within a typically short (1.5 to 3 min. segment) episode. This works well with webcasting because the audience can subscribe and quickly follow or catch up on episodes when it fits their schedule. [8] Dramatic conflicts are always minor and situational; resolutions are always comic; and situations are always fairly plausible. In short, it works for viewers because it is light, amusing, convenient, and watchable. It works for the producers, Iron Sink, because it is inexpensive in terms of technology and talent, easy to shoot and edit in a quick-and-dirty style, and quickly “branded” because of the repetitive characters. For LiveVideo.com it works because it is very inexpensive content which invites regular return viewing (unlike say, the unsorted jungle of YouTube) by a prime demographic (younger viewers) and thus allows for relatively predictable advertising sales on the LiveVideo page. For the onscreen talent, it works because it provides young aspiring actors the all-important exposure so hard to get at the start of a career in Los Angeles, even if the pay is most likely far below union scale. And it is evidence of accomplished onscreen performance that can be brought forward at the next audition. But above all it invites people to become regulars who repeatedly come to the LiveVideo site.

What can you do in 1.5 to 3 minutes of episodic drama? Actually quite a bit. For example, on [A WeHo Mothers Day](#) two of the WeHo Girls phone home. [Click on link to see episode.] The two different calls are cross cut with a hand-held camera recording the daughter’s end of the conversation. It is mildly amusing, because of parallel statements (“Hi, Mom, Happy Mother’s Day....Did you get the flowers I sent?”) that underline the social conventionality of the event, and the virtually obligatory responses to parental worries at the other end of the call: about work, about career, about dating, about settling down into marriage, etc.[9] Completed, the episode comically documents a social convention and obligation through contrast, slightly advances



... they make the obligatory phone call to Mom.



Being an African American Actress, 03/11/07, 2.23 min.: In a continuous take, Mikaela discusses the problem of being a female actor trying to break into the business (only 25% of the acting jobs are for women) and that this is compounded by being black (only 5% of the acting jobs are for African Americans).

character development, and reveals more of the ongoing (and often banal) character universe.

The entire HoShow universe is produced, written, directed, and edited by men while most of the stories involve young women. Some of the situations are easily grasped as improv-like moments (e.g. the Mother's Day phone call home), while others reflect typical 20-something situations (is the new neighbor guy gay or straight? potential dating material or not?). Others seem more boy-writer motivated than character-plausible (the "trial" lesbian kiss; returning to the house after shooting a commercial for condoms with an assortment of absurdly-flavored samples such as buffalo chicken wings.) But none of them reflect deeper problems that might not lead to an easy comic resolution. An exception that proves the rule is WeHo housemate Mikaela in a monologue about her aspiration to be an actor, the limits that she faces as an African American and a woman in the business, and her resolve to improve the situation. [Click here to see clip, [Being an African American Actress](#)] I sense this is a very sincere statement presented by the actor herself, not something scripted for her by a writer.[10]

In a good typical webisode, three of the WeHoGirls enter their living room to find Kim and new neighbor guy Rex on the sofa. Leading up to this event, there were several episodes among the women discussing if Rex was gay or straight. He finally said he was gay, disappointing the gals who saw him as potential dating material.[11] [Click here to see clip, [Rex and Kim Busted](#), 7/29/07]

Shot analysis of *Busted*

Only 1.01 min. long, the episode works very efficiently. The handheld camera enters the room with the three housemates. With the back of the sofa to them, Kim's head pops up, a little surprised or flustered, covering her front with a large pillow. A whip pan gives the 3 gals reaction shot, and then back to the sofa as Rex's head appears and it's clear what has been going on. Roommate Brady expresses her anger and the three intruders exit. Kim follows and Rex is left alone.

In the sequence of shots below, the edits are jump cuts from the single camera, with sound bridges over the cut. The three roommates reaction shot to the reveal of Rex is a classic piece of cinematography known in manuals as "3 faces west," which calls for perfect blocking of the talent, thus revealing the planned nature of the event. However the focus is not perfect throughout: in the first shot of Kim, she is out of focus while the background of the room is sharp. This can be read as a signifier of "authenticity." The camera operator is not revealed within the episode, though at this time in the narrative an unseen character "Kirby" is referenced as the usual cameraperson for the group.



Busted: Camera view of living room with back of sofa. Pan right, two-shot of Brady and Leah. Flustered Kim, “Hey guys...” (repeat) “Hey guys...” Pan left to Kim.



“Kim, you’re home?” Kim: flustered: “I’ve been here for a while.” (covering her front). “Are you naked?” “No! does it look like it?” Cut to reverse shot of the three roommates.



Pan left, back to sofa. Mikaela: “Is someone there?” Two-shot as Rex’s head is revealed. Rex, gives a weak, “Hey.” Pan back to roommates. Leah: “Rex, I thought you were gay.”



Pan back to Rex, “That’s kind of true... (pause) ...in that I told you I was.” Pan right to Kim: “I kind of...” (Cut) “... I kind of broke him a little.” (uneasy grimace)



Pan to roommates (3 faces west). Brady (angry): “Yeah, gay my ass, Rex!” (leaves). Leah: “This is weird.” Mikeala: “Yeah.” (They follow Brady out.)



Cut to Kim, who gets up, flustered. “Guys, let’s talk!” (She follows them.)



Cut back to Rex, who stares. Cut to Kim exiting room, “I’m sorry!”

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JUMP CUT

A REVIEW OF CONTEMPORARY MEDIA



HiHo Drinking Games,
03/17/07: Kimberly and Hannah
get wasted to celebrate St.
Patrick's Day.



Kimberly Gets Screwed,
4/16/07: She owes the IRS back
taxes from modeling jobs.

The basic production techniques used in the HoShow episodes are single camera handheld shooting with available or modestly boosted location lighting and on-camera mike audio (or at times with a single boom mike). By shooting interiors in sunny daylight L.A., available light typically suffices, or the characters move outdoors into open shade. Nighttime shots are rare. The house remains the dominant location, which also serves to suppress ambient noise; especially at the start of the series the roommates seem to be videotaping themselves, or each other. But as time went on, an unnamed and usually unacknowledged cameraperson was recording the event. A sequence is typically modestly edited with jump cuts bridging what were probably blown lines and trimming excess dialogue. There is sometimes cross cutting, especially with explanatory flashbacks to previous activities and episodes. This is efficient and inexpensive production, which uses a small crew of perhaps 3 or 4 on location.

The trope of unrelated young people bonding, interacting, and living together is well established in entertainment media. It's no accident that the HoShows are remarkably like MTV's *The Hills* (and earlier Southern California manifestations such as *Laguna Beach*, *The O.C.*, and before that *Beverly Hills 90210*). At times this seems like a deliberate and mock copy-cattng of plot developments in the cable network series, as with the dilemma of one of the gals having made a sex tape with her then boyfriend which is subsequently lost and which she has to try to track down and find though various minor comic humiliations. What is notable in the mock vlog version is that everything is shortened, compressed, and actually more enjoyable, I'd argue, since you just get the plot high points. The condensed nature of HoShows is especially strong when compared to MTV's *The Hills*, which has the same conceit of being a "reality documentary." [12] [[open notes page in new window](#)]

Recent research on *The Hills* by Amanda Klein and Elizabeth Afuso reveals how the shows are woven into a vast network of the official site, with extras and online repeat viewing, many fan sites, celebrity gossip and paparazzi keyed to entertainment news in print and on air/cable, corporate tie-ins, pop soundtracks (linked to music merchandising), etc. [13] A fair amount of *The Hills* is shot on standard sets (an "office" at *Teen Vogue*), nighttime locations (bars, clubs, restaurants, most of which have corporate tie-ins to the production), and in the recent season distant locations (Paris, Colorado Rockies). Understandably given this vastly larger scope, *The Hills* uses a large technical crew and production staff and



Kimberly's Modeling Horror Story, 2/1/07: She tells how her parents did not intervene to stop professional abuse as a teenage model.



Sperm Bank Encounter, 09/11/07, 2:15 min.: Near the end of the series, Leah considers becoming a single mother and goes to a fertility clinic. Outside, she runs into Eddie, a VanNuysGuy with whom she had a one time affair (Eddie was cheating on Daniella.) That initiated a “missing sex tape” narrative line for several episodes. At the clinic Eddie indicates he just made money by donating sperm, and the pair awkwardly realize that Leah could end up having his donation inseminate her. Leah feigns that this would be fine; but we know she finds the idea disturbing.

consistently exhibits extensive interior lighting work, tripod mounted multiple camera shooting, and repeated takes with extended cross cutting in editing dialogue scenes. While *The Hills* highlights the clubs and restaurants the characters visit, the HoGirls seldom go to locations, and when they do it is typically a public park or inexpensive food in an unidentified neighborhood place.

MTV has pioneered what they call “unscripted series” or what I prefer to call “projective drama” which is the dramatic presentation of a situation that the core audience views in anticipation that they will be in a similar situation sometime in the future. Thus the middle school and high school core audience for *Real World* and *Road Rules*. These shows prefigure what life will be like when you leave the parental nest and live with others, in college, while working, etc.[14] The demographics of these shows are skewed to a group that’s younger than the people who are on screen. The critically acclaimed MTV show *Undressed* presented the same thing around becoming sexually active, and was innovative in its time for showing gay/lesbian/bi characters among the breeders.

Yet this type of light weight drama also quickly opens up to critical commentary when the characters seem especially vapid. As Nancy Franklin mentions in a recent *New Yorker* piece on *The Hills*,

“We see a lot of Lauren and her friends at clubs and restaurants, talking about relationships, at their apartments talking about relationships, and on the phone talking about relationships. Most of the conversations start with one or another of the girls asking Lauren what she did the night before, and, constant as the questions are, they seem to be asked not out of curiosity but out of obligation, as if the girls were being paid to ask — as, indeed, they are.... For younger viewers — who are the intended audience for the series — it may be a soothing fantasy about coming of age and give them the sense that even after they leave their parent’s house they will still be the center of attention, the way these girls are.”[15]

Why can a mock documentary form work more effectively as entertainment than “real” vlogging? As Alex Juhasz points in discussing her course on YouTube, democratizing the tools of production doesn’t overcome but actually reinforces the strong marked difference between amateur and professional (that is corporate) media texts:

“The place to speak and be heard on YouTube is through video: which easily links sounds, language, and images. However, most newly empowered videomakers on YouTube are not educated or adept in the language of images, and thus depend on the relaying of their recorded words, primarily through the talking-head or



Leah Was Looking Hot Today, 09/11/07: VanNuysGuy Eddie describes his encounter with Leah at the sperm bank.



Leah Prays to the Porcelain God, 2/02/07: Leah pukes.



Leah & Brady Come for the Sex Tape, 02/03/07: Leah and Brady arrive at the NoHo house seeking the missing sex tape, that Cara said she had. When they arrive, it is lost again.

rant of the vlog. Meanwhile, professional content on YouTube abounds. ‘Corporate’ videos look good — like mainstream media — because they are made by professionals...”[16]

Amateur work is actually dumbed down by the very structures of the corporate-controlled system it enters. For example, most vlogs are just someone in front of their computer screen talking to a webcam, which is built into their computer. By and large, vlogs are visually dismal and communication is done through oral presentation of verbal material — that is talking, or sometimes singing or lip-synching — not through visual presentation or dramatic narration. In contrast, by using the relatively simple and thrifty visual communication style it pioneered, Iron Sink Media stands above and apart from the amateur work on video sites while still maintaining the “veracity effect” of amateur aesthetics.

With *Roommates*, Iron Sink had a larger budget and the production values are higher, the episodes are a bit snappier, getting to the point and picking up the pace. The “reality” effect is submerged to the entertainment effect — and narrative development. So to its originators, the HoShows are just a transitional form in New Media. But it could be useful to take a critical look at the form to think about how others might be able to use it. The bonded group of friends is a sitcom staple, often seen in the workplace drama as well as the family-and-neighbors model. HoShows falls at the technically low end of the single friends model, with *Sex and the City* as the glossiest recent series, and *Seinfeld* and *Friends* as more traditionally jokey sitcom examples. Yet HoShows do not have the intensely ratcheted-up dialogue of mainstream sitcoms which are written and rewritten by writing teams to mark every dramatic beat with a laugh line. Based on internal evidence it seems that HoShow episodes are marked out for the major action, but the onscreen talent then improvises on the storyline, and repetitions and false starts are removed in the editing.

The HoShows’ internal world interweaves characters and story lines. For example, the two HiHo Girls, Hannah and Kimberly, show up in January 07, after the other houses had begun, and it ends 6/6/07 with the pair splitting up. But Hannah goes to NoHo and Kim goes to WeHo, so they continue in the series. Most of the series involves relationship matters, but there are also inconsequential moments such as *HiHo Drinking Games*, 03/17/07 in which the pair celebrate St. Patrick’s Day. A seemingly serious issue forms a conversation in one episode but never appears again: Kimberley owes the Internal Revenue Service a lot of back taxes because her modeling jobs were freelance and taxes were not automatically deducted from her pay (*Kimberley Gets Screwed*, 4/16/07). A presumably character-revealing story early on in the series never seems decisive or resolved. In *Kimberly’s Modeling Horror Story*, she reveals that as a 15 year old she was on a modeling job with a



Brady Finally Gets It, 02/03/07: Ending her pregnancy scare, Brady finally gets her period.



Leah and Lucy Go to Make Out Mountain, 2/28/07: House visitor Lucy drives Leah to an overlook of Los Angeles. She admits she's been embezzling from her employer and also comes on to Leah, who had earlier "tried" a first lesbian kiss with Lucy. Leah balks. Lucy kicks her out of the car ("Don't be such a clit tease!") and drives off.

female photographer who cleared the set and then was very provocative to the teen who found it disturbing. She tells her parents, who essentially just tell her to "suck it up" if she wants to be a professional model because the business is like this. The incident seems like it might be autobiographical for the actor since it is rather vivid and clearly still brings forward a strong emotional response. But if we read it for the character, it doesn't seem to shape future development, except perhaps to provide a clue to her apparent casualness to sex. Or to set up a further story line of parental neglect, if not abuse, à la Lindsay Lohan

After the breakup of the HiHos, Kimberly lives with the WeHos, and an aftermath of the "busted" episode finds her puking and missing her period; another episode taking a home pregnancy test with the housemates reading the results, and her realization that she's pregnant by Rex. Things continue to become increasingly implausible when she says (1) she has no future with Rex because he's not good at making love, and she will not tell him about the pregnancy; (2) there is no discussion of ending the pregnancy or why this is not an option for her; (3) that she had unprotected sex with Rex, even though he had self-identified as a gay man and this was a casual first encounter; (4) that she trusted Rex to not get her pregnant because he was a gynecologist (given that Rex looks to be about 22 at most, this seems the most absurd plot device). Finally, she leaves the WeHos and joins up with Hannah, reforming the HiHos, but ending the vlogging. While producer Sakarin might frame these improbable events as part of the "reality farce," the narrative remains comically and dramatically weak in all directions.

Of course one of the obvious draw backs of the extremely short webisodic format is while some things can be covered over several episodes, none of the episodes allow for any substantial development of thought, character, or action. Thus characters can make a quick reference to what's happening on *American Idol*, or the release of *The Simpsons Movie*, but there's no actual discussion. WeHo housemate Brady has a pregnancy scare (*The Missing Period*, 01/29/07) and the father would be a guy she broke up with. Two days later, the episode features her end of a phone call from her father scolding her for having her situation revealed online (*Papa Don't Preach*, 01/31/07). Shortly afterward the scare is over (*Brady Finally Gets It*, 2/03/07), but as with Kimberly, there's no discussion at all of ending the pregnancy or why that's not an option for Brady. But to ask for more of the short webisodic format is to subvert its very nature and turn it toward soap opera (with a richer emotional and character development; *Quarterlife* is an excellent example). Or more development might turn it toward social documentary, perhaps something closer to the PBS-favored long form TV documentary such as *An American Love Story* (Jennifer Fox, 9 hrs, 50 min. 1999) in which a family is examined during their ups and downs over a period of years.



Ode to My Vibrator, 1/05/07:
Leah reads a poem she wrote
praising her vibrator.

Fake vlogs, even with modest resources, can easily trump most real vlogs generated by sincere but media naïve makers. But they can never get very far in terms of critical reach. This is compounded by the general slacker image of the males present. Numerous critics have pointed at the common trope of current romantic comedies with a bright, attractive, and compelling woman who gets saddled to an immature child-man (*Waitress*, *Knocked Up*, etc.). Many have also remarked on this trope as a generational development, so it is perhaps a “realistic” element of the HoShow narratives. And the female characters don’t demonstrate the ambition, determination, talent, or style that itself attracts interesting men. WeHoGirl “Leah Wagner” is described on her MySpace page as working at a PR firm and making \$45,000-60,000 a year, but nothing in her wardrobe, appearance, and manner ever makes this occupation and income plausible.[17] Thus the short webisode and limited budget themselves mark a distinct limit to the HoShow form. It would be a truism as well as a cliché to say HoShows are a transitional form, but it’s useful to remember they came into existence from a convergence of new technologies, new platforms for exhibition, and marketing’s need to reach a target audience with a cost effective format. For a year, HoShows did just that. And the river flowed on allowing for new configurations. This is the basic New Media story: change and flux is the permanent address.

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Notes

1. An earlier version was presented at Console-ing Passions: International Conference on Television, Audio, Video, New Media and Feminism, University of California, Santa Barbara, April 2008. At an early stage of my research Cary Jones shared her research interest in Southern California on TV, and Bill Bleich discussed it in terms of screenwriting and production practices. [[return to page one of essay](#)]

2. Jennicam

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jennicam>

3. Iron Sink: <http://www.ironsink.com/>

4. <http://www.livevideo.com/video/wehogirls>

<http://www.livevideo.com/HiHoGirls>

<http://www.livevideo.com/nohogirls>

<http://www.livevideo.com/VanNuysGuys>

5. Lonelygirl15 quickly became an early popular vlog which was then revealed to be a fake reality show. Widely discussed, it was among the first to raise extensive attention to the ethics and use of mock formats on the Internet.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lonely_Girl_15

6. http://www.laist.com/2006/10/15/the_noho_vs_weho_girls_another_fake_or_for_real.php

7. <http://www.zabberbox.com/phpBB3>

8. Today, now that the entire series is history, people are most likely to access an episode out of order, especially if reposted to another site, or recommended by someone. By going to the WeHo page on LiveVideo now, one can access the entire series and have it presented by “most recent,” “most popular,” “most viewed,” etc. filters. Thus the series in its full sequence can be viewed in progression by choosing “most recent” and then paging back to the first episode and starting there. But early on the WeHos interact with the NoHos, HiHos, and VanNuysGuys, so one would need to

keep track of all of them for a true chronological span. Early adopters could sign up for a subscription or set of subscriptions.

9. *A WeHo Mother's Day*

<http://www.livevideo.com/video/14944F355818453B8213E25A8F38AF74/a-weho-mother-s-day-5-13-07.aspx?lastvcid=198784>

10. *Being an African American Actress:*

<http://www.livevideo.com/video/41D9448E9AB84A928E54CA8229B12Fo2/being-an-african-american-actress-03-11-07.aspx?lastvcid=107641>

At another point, the NoHoGirls talk sincerely about the Virginia Tech shooting a week earlier.

<http://www.livevideo.com/video/nohogirls/2F7A4B4E5F174FoCBCF6B6CAB00A6CB7/to-the-victims-of-virginia-tec.aspx>

11. *Rex and Kim Busted*, 7/29/07

<http://www.livevideo.com/video/32215B74A3FF4780A47EoC855CF1D1D4/rex-and-kim-busted-6-29-07.aspx?lastvcid=258511>

12. Another apt comparison here would be to the web-only 20-something drama *Quarterlife*, produced by Marshall Herskovitz and Edward Zwick, who did the broadcast TV shows *Thirtysomething*, and *My So-Called Life*, and the film *Blood Diamond*. This series used 10 minute web-only episodes that were first shown during the WGA strike and the home site (www.quarterlife.com) has an extensive social networking apparatus, connects with MySpace and FaceBook, and calls itself “a community for artists, thinkers, and do-ers.” *Quarterlife* is more of a soap narrative format, while the HoShows are close to a sitcom set up and punchline. And HoShows are mercifully shorter than, say, TV skit comedy such as SNL and MadTV which often seem strained at milking their premise because of their longer temporal development, restriction to a single set, and a pace that seems increasingly slow, boring, dated, and out of step in a textmessage era. [[return to page 2](#)]

13. Amanda Klein, “Postmodern Marketing: Generation Y and the Multi-Platform Viewing experience of MTV’s *The Hills*,” and Elizabeith Affuso, “ ‘Don’t Just Watch It, Live It’: Technology, Corporate Partnerships and *The Hills*.” Papers presented at the Console-ing Passions Conference, Santa Barbara, April 2008.

14. Of course, the ruling elite typically have this as a matter of

course: the private boarding school for high school years, and if not that, the sophisticated summer camp or organized foreign tour, to socialize one at an early age into cosmopolitan experience. For the upper middle class residential college is the big step; for the middle class, public university. Lower middle class students are more likely to attend college while commuting from home. For the working poor and working class, military service is often the first experience of living with strangers.

15. “Frenemy Territory: The hills are alive with the sound of girl talk,” *The New Yorker*, April 21, 2008, 136-37

16. “Teaching on YouTube,”
http://www.oculture.com/2008/04/teaching_on_youtube.html

17. The same actor (Tara DeSpain) reappears in *Roommates* as “Peyton Reeve,” also with an onsite fake bio:
www.myspace.com/roommates and
<http://www.myspace.com/peytonreeve>).

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